

Remarks/Arguments:

Claims 1 and 3-11 are pending in the above-identified application. Claim 2 is canceled by this amendment. Claim 9 is amended to correct a typographical error and to be independent in form including the limitations of claim 1 from which it previously depended. Thus, the scope of claim 9 is not changed by this amendment.

Claims 1 and 2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious in view of Berenbaum et al. U.S. pat no. 6,272,144 (hereinafter Berenbaum) and Griffin et al. U.S. pat no. 5,406,403 (hereinafter Griffin). Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration. In particular, neither Berenbaum, Griffin nor their combination disclose or suggest,

a single decoder serving the plurality of modules, the single decoder decoding the mode selection bits of the packets and providing respective mode selection signals to the plurality of modules;

wherein each of the modules is operable in a reconfiguration mode in which the data portion of the packet is used change the data processing performed by the module or a processing mode in which the data portion of the packet is processed by the data processing module, responsive to the respective mode selection signal,

as required by claim 1.

In the Office Action, with reference to claim 4, it is asserted that Berenbaum discloses these features at column 4, lines 37-42. Applicants respectfully disagree with this assertion. In particular, in the cited passage it is stated that "the control processor ... is used to transfer control information to the transmission convergence device 54 along the same path as the ATM data flow." This passage indicates that, rather than "providing respective mode selection signals to the plurality of modules," the control processor of Berenbaum sets control bits in the packets and sends the packets to the line cards through the normal ATM channels. Indeed, Berenbaum teaches away from having a single decoder that provides separate control signals to the line cards. (See column 1, lines 59-63).

Griffin does not disclose or suggest a single decoder serving a plurality of modules which decodes the mode selection bits of the packets to provide respective mode selection signals to the modules. Instead, Griffin discloses sending reconfiguration data packets from a transmitter to a receiver using bits in the packet to indicate whether the data represents configuration information. (See col. 3, lines 30-41). Consequently, Griffin can not provide the material that

is missing from Berenbaum. Because neither Berenbaum, Griffin nor their combination disclose or suggest the limitations of claim 1, claim 1 is not subject to rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of Berenbaum and Griffin. The rejection of claim 2 is moot in view of the cancellation of that claim.

Claims 3-7 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious in view of Berenbaum and Griffin and further in view of the article by Laufer et al. (hereinafter Laufer). Berenbaum and Griffin are described above. Laufer was cited as disclosing that "the frame header contains at least one mode selection bit for each of the modules." Applicant respectfully disagrees with this assertion. In particular, Laufer discloses a Chip ID which identifies a particular chip that the header is meant to control. This is not the same as a dedicated mode selection bit for each of the modules. The use of the Chip ID requires that each module have a mechanism for recognizing when the Chip ID of a packet matches or does not match its own Chip ID. As disclosed in Fig. 4, Chip ID's are assigned as consecutive integers. Thus, the Chip ID used by Laufer can not be "at least one mode selection bit for each of the modules," as required by claim 3. The mechanism that would be used by Laufer to process the Chip ID is much more complex than a simple gating scheme that may be used by a system according to the present invention in which the single decoder merely examines the state of a respective bit in the header for each module in order to generate the mode selection signal. Thus a system according to the present invention may be simpler than a device including a Chip ID field as disclosed by Laufer. In addition, claim 3 depends from claim 1 and Laufer does not provide the material, described above, that is missing from Berenbaum and Griffin with respect to the response to the rejection of claim 1. Accordingly, claim 3 is not subject to rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of Berenbaum, Griffin and Laufer. Claims 4 and 5 depend from claim 3 and claims 6, 7 and 11 depend from claim 1. Thus, these claims are not subject to rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of Berenbaum, Griffin and Laufer for at least the same reasons as the claims from which they depend.

Claims 8, 9 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious in view of Berenbaum, Griffin and U.S. pat. no. 6,501,807 to Chieu et al. (hereinafter Chieu). With regard to claim 9, this ground for rejection is respectfully traversed. In particular, neither Berenbaum, Griffin nor Chieu disclose or suggest that "default configuration data is supplied to at least one module of the plurality of modules from a memory outside the at least one module." In the Office Action, it is asserted that the memory 24 of Chieu meets this limitation. Applicants

respectfully disagree with this assertion. In particular, the memory 24 is disclosed as providing "program instructions utilized upon the initial start-up of the interrogator 10. These instructions are provided to the microcontroller 22 which is in the same module 20 as the memory 24. Thus, Chieu does not disclose a memory "outside the at least one module," as required by claim 9. Accordingly, claim 9 is not subject to rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of Berenbaum, Griffin and Chieu.

Claims 8 and 10 depend from claim 1. Berenbaum and Griffin are described above. Chieu discloses an RF/ID interrogator. It discloses only a single unit and, so, can not disclose or suggest the material that is missing from Berenbaum and Griffin, as described above. Accordingly, claims 8 and 10 are not subject to rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious in view of Berenbaum, Griffin and Chieu.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 1 and 3-11.

Respectfully submitted,



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